



The Pensioner: *Looking Forward*

Welcome to the digital MPERS newsletter! *The Pensioner: Looking Forward* contains news, updates, and important information for active employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, and MPERS.

2021 Legislation Introduced

House Bill 701 is the Missouri State Employees' Retirement System's and MPERS' cleanup bill. This bill, if enacted, will correct errors and references, as well as clarify confusing statutory language.

Senate Bill 238, if enacted, would change MPERS' board makeup. The proposed bill reduces the number of highway commissioners on the board from three to one and would add a Governor-appointed trustee with institutional investment experience.



In addition to providing you with updates during the session, we will update our website at the end of the legislative session to include any bills that pertain to MPERS business. If you would like to follow the progress of these bills, please visit the [Joint Committee on Public Employee Retirement](#)

Long-Term Goals, Immediate Benefits



MPERS' retirement benefits are funded by employer contributions, employee contributions, and investment earnings. Investing is a tool that is commonly used to aid in pension plan funding and it is important to understand that most plans are long-term investors.

The fund's investment returns can vary from year to year, but over longer periods are the largest funding source for MPERS. These returns can vary based upon the asset allocation of the portfolio, market performance, and the talent of the professionals managing the funds.

Even though MPERS' investment staff pay close attention to the day-to-day investment returns and what is happening in the markets, they are more focused on long-term returns. For example, if you look at MPERS' investment returns as of November 2020, the three-month return is 5.54%, which is below the Board's assumed 7% rate-of-return benchmark. However, the 10-year return is 8.58%, which is above the assumed rate of return, and much more meaningful to the greater (and longer-term) investment picture.

MPERS' long-term goal is to achieve the assumed 7% rate of return. The Board reviews the asset allocation annually to ensure it remains consistent with the return expectations of the plan.

New Divorce Legislation in Effect

Senate Substitute for Senate Committee Substitute for House Bills 1467 and 1934 was passed during the 2020 legislative session and affected the divorce provision in MPERS' statutes. Effective January 1, 2021, members who chose a joint and survivor payment option at retirement, then later divorced, can undo the survivor option as long as the requirements of the statute are met.

Previously, if a member chose a joint and survivor payment option at retirement and later divorced, the election could not be changed.

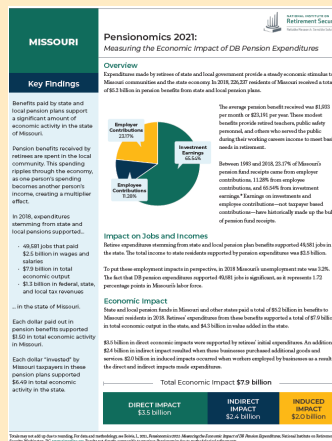
If you have questions about the new provision, [please see our website for more information](#)

Do Public Pensions Benefit Missouri?

Did you know that Missouri has five large public pension plans? These plans have a positive and significant impact on the state of Missouri's economy.

According to the National Institute on Retirement Security, for each \$1 in state and local pension benefits paid to Missouri residents, \$1.50 is put back into the Missouri economy. That adds up to over \$1.3 billion in revenue for federal, state, and local governments!

To read more about how public pensions benefit the state of Missouri, check out the National Institute on Retirement Security's publication [Pensionomics 2021: Measuring the Economic Impact of DB Pension Expenditures.](#)



Seminar Season is Here! Check Out the Schedules Below!

2021 Pre-Retirement Webinars

If you are within five years of normal retirement eligibility or are already eligible for retirement, this webinar is for you!

Closed Plan and Year 2000 Plan

- February 10
- March 17
- April 15
- May 11
- June 10
- July 13
- August 25
- September 22
- October 14

2011 Tier

- April 28
- November 16

**Register for a Pre-Retirement
Webinar!**

2021 Mid-Career Checkup Webinars

This webinar is for members who have between 5-15 years of service and for those who are within 6-15 years of normal retirement eligibility.

Closed Plan and Year 2000 Plan

- February 24
- May 20
- July 15
- September 8

2011 Tier

- March 30
- June 22
- August 11
- October 20

[Register for a Mid-Career Checkup!](#)



Check out this month's benefit bite!

Choosing the best payment option for you and your family is one of the most important decisions you will be faced with at retirement. Knowing what those payment options are ahead of time is key.

This month's benefit bite looks at the life income annuity, joint and survivor, and guaranteed payment options and how they may affect your future retirement benefit.



Upcoming Events

- February 10 - Pre-Retirement Webinar for Closed Plan and Year 2000 Plan members [Register Here](#)
- February 12 - Lincoln's Birthday, office open
- February 15 - Presidents Day, office closed
- February 24 - Mid-Career Checkup for Closed Plan and Year 2000 Plan members [Register Here](#)
- February 26 - Board meeting



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We value your feedback!
What would you like to see in ***The Pensioner: Looking Forward?***
Send comments and suggestions to Julie.West@mpers.org.